

Drexel Hill, PA – On Saturday, February 23, Congressman Joe Sestak (D-PA) addressed over 300 Delaware County firefighters during the Delaware County Fireman's Association Dinner held at Drexelbrook in Drexel Hill. — "Volunteer firefighters, devote their free time to serve their communities while putting their lives on the line to protect local residents, truly epitomize the 'dignity of danger,' said Congressman Sestak. "I am very humbled to speak tonight at the Delaware County Fireman's Association Dinner. The men and women here tonight display exemplary public service and heroism as they put their lives in harm's way to serve their communities and protect their neighbors. They are twice the citizen: who have jobs during the day and families to raise, but still volunteer their time to serve the public during their time off."

Since taking office last January, Congressman Sestak has been an active supporter of both professional and volunteer firefighters, and is a member of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.

To that end, Congressman Sestak has cosponsored bipartisan legislation to provide tax relief for volunteer first responders. The legislation, the Volunteer Firefighter's Tax Incentive Protection Act (H.R. 943), would allow state and local governments the flexibility to develop beneficial tax incentives, including property tax abatements, retirement awards, death benefits, health benefits, and state income tax credits, for encouraging recruitment and retention for volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel.

In addition, the Congressman has been working to garner support for the Christopher Kangas Fallen Firefighter Fairness Act (HR 2224), a bill he introduced, to bring equity to fire fighter benefits, regardless of age or status as an apprentice or trainee. Christopher Kangas was 14-years-old and a junior firefighter in Brookhaven when he died in 2002 from multiple head traumas as a result of being struck by a car while answering a fire call on his bicycle.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from

Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.